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Mosaic Workers

JUST FORTY YEARS AGO there were still "two gentlemen of Verona", thus nicknamed by the local newspaper as the only Englishmen domiciled in that rose-red city. One lived up to this romantic situation by bearing the name of Montmorency and treading the streets in a silver-braided frock coat of his own design, with a trailing sword. The other was an inconspicuous student of the arts—myself.

So sudden an outburst of autobiography can only be excused if it leads rapidly to some matter of more general interest. Mount my bicycle, then (a veteran which was to meet its doom, at the age of thirty-five, in the 'blitz'), and ride through Vicenza, Padua and the villages of Venetia, until dusty and delectable days of riding bring you to Venice itself. On one such arrival I carried in my pocket a note of introduction from the very proud and very poor descendant of a Venetian Doge to the engineer of St. Mark's Cathedral. When you bear in mind that all Venice floats upon its lagoon, a raft of massive brick and stone standing upon a forest of wooden legs in the mud, you realise what an anxious engineering task it must be to keep this glorious church standing in its place through nearly ten centuries. Five great domes, five hundred marble columns within and without, massive bronzes, walls 'papered' with sheets of precious stone and ceilings with mosaics are the result of countless gifts of piety and the great gift of piracy in the high days of Venetian history. Thus hung round with splendour, St. Mark's is vastly overweighted. The ceaseless lapping of water, the keen tools of storm and frost, the old age of the unseen piles below, shake such a

building and, not long before my visits, had brought its towering Campanile crashing to the ground.

The engineer of St. Mark's has his work cut out, and I spent an unforgettable day while he showed it to me. We crawled about the roof together in the sunshine and, climbing the outside of the central dome, looked sheer down through a small hole to the floor of the church below. In one wall, screened from the public, I thrust my arm up to the shoulder into a long crack—that was the engineer's next 'headache'. And then he invited me to the workshop where the mosaics are repaired.

Bits and Pieces

May I pause for a couple of paragraphs on the mosaics? Everyone knows that if he descends to the engine-room of a steamship, whether an ocean queen or a crusted tramp, he is likely to find an authentic Scot in charge. I admit, however, to surprise when I met red-bearded Mr. Mackenzie in the workshop of St. Mark's, commanding in flowing Italian (with a faint, endearing Clyde-side flavour) a squad of skilled Venetian mosaic workers. On a wide table in front of them were spread several square feet of mosaic, containing many hundreds of tiny pieces. Four of these, given to me that day, lie on the table as I write. The two smallest, one gold, one blue, measure barely a quarter of an inch across: they date from the tenth century and they retain a gleaming life of their own, far surpassing the other two which belong to the time of my visit, nearly a thousand years later. Therein lies a moral for our own machine age—"the touch of a vanished hand" in the arts.

As the patch of pieces lay there on the table it had no delights for the eye, for it was as dirty brown as the pebbles uncovered by the ebb of a muddy tide. A workman picked out a piece, turned it over in his fingers, cleaned its underside—and there was an instant glitter of gold or a kingfisher flash of blue. From a sheet of coloured glass beside him he clipped a piece, matched in size and colour as nearly as he could, and set it, face downward, in the gap left by the ancient, decaying fragment. He was rebuilding a pattern which he *could not see*, and its whole meaning would stand or fall by his faithfulness in these very little things. Only when the restored patch was back in its place in

the church would he behold, for the first time, the success of his patient labour—the great pattern restored, let us hope, for a few more centuries, the lovely leaves and birds, the wings of St. Mark's lion, the monumental saints and the heroes of the Bible, all made ready to tell their stories again to fresh generations of childlike minds. For the walls and ceiling of St. Mark's Cathedral are a grand picture-book of the ages.*

Behold a Parable

In this scene, not overlaid, I trust, with too much digression, behold, brethren, a parable of wide and various application. On the personal 'level' (to use a cant word of our time) the life of each one of us is a mosaic, made up of little pieces, trivial daily happenings, chance meetings that lead to friendship or marriage, to a change of mind or occupation, to the love or fear or happiness or hatred that affect the direction in which we move and build the brief pattern of our years on earth. The lives of some of us, as we are inwardly aware, are disordered, like a mosaic arranged at random or one of those church windows, smashed by fanaticism or war, in which the fragments of stained glass have been replaced to cover the opening but no longer tell any story. Such lives may be rich in colour, but they have little meaning. Others among us are confident that the hand of a supreme Artist disposes the pieces, casual and unexpected as they often appear to us, and builds up, even with our inferior material, a pattern He can use in His great plan.

On the 'level' of our society every Toc H Branch is surely a mosaic, either dull or delightful. If it is true to its intention it is multicoloured; each man, like the stars, "differeth in glory". Dante's *Paradise* grows wearisome, it has been said, because it

* Crudely, the repair is done thus. When a patch of mosaic (there are nearly 50,000 square feet of it in St. Mark's) needs attention, because it is perishing from old age or cracked by the movement of the fabric, workmen climb up and stick a large sheet of paper, by means of powerful glue, on its face and pull it thus away from the wall. Carrying it to the workshop they lay it, face downward on the table and restore it, piece by piece, from behind, as I saw them doing it. When finished they bear it back again and plant it in the gap, now filled with fresh cement. When this is well set they can peel away the paper and wash clean the face of the mosaic.

contains "*troppo luce*"—too much light, and the great vaulted room in the Stockholm Town Hall, crusted all over with gold mosaic, will never challenge our interest like the broken lights on the storied ceiling of St. Mark's. The ideal Branch of Toc H is full of contrasts and makes a rich pattern of light and shade. One man has the sparkle of wit, another the rich gold of goodness, a third the sober brown of thought, and all the workaday 'pieces' in common colours are essential, as they fit into their places, to give the picture meaning. Every variety of upbringing, income, occupation and experience is needed and the stark opposition of temperament and opinion keeps the pattern lively. The temptation which besets some of our mosaic workers is that they build their Branch by picking up the pieces that fit most easily and 'tone' together without trouble: the result is bound to be drab and lifeless.

The metaphor for our movement should, of course, be pushed a stage further. Each Branch is, so to say, only a few square feet of a much larger design, but the skill and purpose with which it is put together will decorate or damage the whole, or perhaps be passed over by any observer as merely indifferent. In the House we seek to make beautiful for the use of men each Area, therefore, has its particular panel to cover with devices of its own choosing, each section of the Family at home and overseas its own wall at the disposal of artists whose style will differ but will add richness and not disharmony to the whole.

'Ars Longa'

Mosaic working is the slowest of the arts, and the single workman seldom lives to see his craftsmanship in the grand setting of the final result. In St. Mark's the first mosaic artists were at work before the Norman Conquest of England; the best were busy in the 13th century; and their successors were adding patches as Queen Victoria came to the throne. (It is a melancholy reflection, not without a moral, that the later the work in Venice the the feebler the inspiration, the craftsmanship and the materials.) Nearer home, you can go any day into Westminster Cathedral and see how much, or how little, the mosaic workers have accomplished, with interruptions, in fifty years or so; none of us now living, probably not our children, will see the bare walls of this

great church fully clothed in the splendid colour of myriads of tiny cubes of glass and stone. In Toc H, too, our work will never be done. Enough if it grows, if every member, adding his piece or two, works with his utmost craft. He will need to keep always in mind the plan laid down, for mosaic is a disciplined art, but as the pattern grows, to use his liveliest imagination in devising fresh variety and beauty of his own.

The World we live in

Next, let us stretch our similitude to cover a vastly wider field, the 'level' of world affairs. All human history since the beginning is a mosaic, the most intricate and fascinating that we know. Some see it as a lot of pieces jostled together by blind chance, others as a pattern controlled by impersonal forces with names like 'Progress' or 'Evolution' or 'Economics', others again as a design bedevilled by a malignant Fate. None of these is an explanation of human life good enough for the Christian. For us the vast mosaic of history expresses a Purpose, however much it is marred and misintrepreted by workmen as wilful and unskilful as ourselves; the great design of it, gradually unrolled before our shortsighted eyes, is plain only to the Divine Draughtsman who plans it age by age. Reduced to the proportions of ants busy in a limitless forest, as scientists persuade us, we still make bold to believe that each one of us counts as a son of God and is cared for by Him. This is the tremendous assumption of our faith and it has to be substantiated by our actions. Toc H, to all appearances an insignificant company of Christian workmen, has a corner allotted to it in the immense mosaic of history. This may seem absurd, but it is true. And in the little we can do, faithfulness is all.

Compared with the pattern of history in Victorian times, which seemed to flow with some regularity and ease, the mosaic of the last half-century has been full of abrupt and ugly angles. At some moments in this time we workmen have found ourselves pottering, uncertain what to do next; at others we have worked in a fever of blood and sweat, "staggering to and fro, men's hearts failing them for fear". No one dares to call this an 'Age of Faith'; and where faith falters, the hand loses hold. The unstable mood of the times is inevitably reflected, in little, within

T'oe H. and the honest member, looking at the movement as it is—and loving it, often reflects how much better its workmanship might be:

Turning the Corner?

And now, after the breaches made by two world wars and the corrosion of unemployment and distress among millions of people, East and West, we seem to have come to a vital corner. Does the familiar pattern of our civilisation go round it into another great expanse of history or will it be broken off abruptly, with a jagged edge silhouetted against an impenetrable gulf of shadow?

There is nothing incredible, or even unlikely, about the second alternative; it would not be the first time it has happened in the experience of mankind. Even now, nine thousand years of Chinese culture seem to be crumbling into chaos, and in the West, each day more plainly, we are aware of a great question-mark. At home 'shortages' threaten more than a new 'Hungry Forties', while across half Europe dusk has already hidden the bare outline of the 'Four Freedoms' which to us make life worth living—freedom of speech and worship, freedom from want and from fear. Will darkness, as in the beginning, cover the earth? The Gospel has bidden us not to be surprised at such portents but above all not to be afraid. 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity' makes a good motto for Christians these days.

We can do no more here than remind ourselves of the last time the pattern broke and the civilisation of Europe went down on the grand scale, the story, told by Gibbon in many volumes, of 'decline and fall', prostration and darkness, and the returning signs of light. Rome, heiress of Greece and mistress of many nations, seemed so 'set' that to the Roman man-in-the-street the end of his familiar world must have been as unthinkable as that of ours is to his counterpart in London or Paris today—or in Prague yesterday. Yet when peoples more primitive and virile, Goth and Visigoth, Frank and Ostrogoth, hammered on the Eastern frontier, province by province went down. Most terrible of all, the Huns swept in from the steppes of Asia, and Attila, in the year 410, was master of the Eternal City. Unthinkable to Rome's man-in-the-street that the invincible army should be beaten, his town-hall authority melt away overnight, the massive

landmarks set by architects and engineers crash about his head, the luxury shops up the street be sacked and himself, who had so lately been watching games, be on the run in a panic-stricken mob! It is never quite true to say that 'History repeats itself'; the pattern may be similar but is never the same. It would be utterly wrong to prophesy that anything to match this is bound to happen now; but it would be merely foolish to hide behind the phrase 'It *can't* happen here'.

The Key to the Pattern

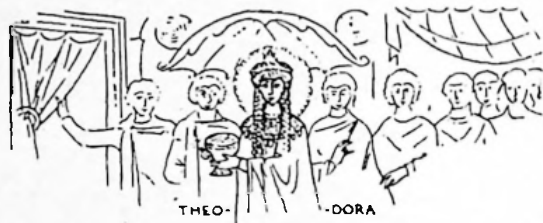
Throughout the darkness of that dreadful time the Christian Church—that is, *men and women like you and me*—guarded a treasure of faith entrusted to them, kept a light burning, if screened by a bushel, until once more it could be set on a candlestick for all men to see and, if they chose, to walk by. May I, in a last lap, illustrate this from the history of mosaic?

When the walls of empire began to crumble, the Roman army of occupation evacuated the outlying colony of Britain and hurried homewards; the civil servants and the business men, with their families, mostly went too—much as the British, for other reasons, are about to leave Palestine. The Romans had been on our soil for four hundred years, and they left behind them a wealth of 'permanent' buildings, temples and markets, barracks and baths, and the comfortable homes of gentlemen farmers and city men. Their most expensive floors were 'tessellated' with rich patterns in mosaic—for the natives of Italy were—as they remain to this day—the world's best workers in this craft.

When the invaders, wave on wave of Germans and Scandinavians, flowed into Britain, the Roman buildings were wrecked or suffered to tumble into decay. It was many centuries before chance or the inquisitive digger began again to clear the soil and rubble from the tessellated floors and in places like Folkestone and Cirencester, Woodchester and St. Albans and Bath, to uncover forgotten beauties in mosaic—the Neptune or Minerva of a temple, the nymphs and garlands or domestic dogs and ducks on the parlour 'carpet'.

Mosaic in our land was never a native art, but in Italy itself it did not sleep long, even in the darkness of the fifth and sixth centuries. It was then (four hundred years before St. Mark's)

that the great churches of Ravenna were built and their walls glorified with the gold and colours of mosaic. But now the patterns had a new purpose, no longer to please the eye with household animals or the outworn gods but to remind men of the scenes and saints of the Christian faith, to hold up a light and teach them anew. Even when the tremendous figure of the reigning Empress of Byzantium is shown at Ravenna—Theodora, the circus-girl who became one of the greatest women of history—she wears a halo and, bearing a golden gift in her hands, strides towards the doorway of a church from which one of her attendants lifts the curtain. She comes to give what she can and to worship. Can any one of us, in our day, do more?



The patterns of mosaic in our personal lives, in our movement, in world affairs, are more than the random adding of piece to piece. They have a climax, a point to which they move. It provides the key to all this labour, it makes sense of the whole. In the great mosaic series of Ravenna or Venice or even, still visible under Moslem obliteration, in Constantinople, the pattern marches towards the eastern apse, the half-dome above the altar itself. And there a Figure, grander than all the rest, immense in majesty, presides—Christ, the King, sitting upon a throne. Usually His face is that of a *young* man, unbearded, and He lifts His hand, sometimes gently in blessing, sometimes sternly in judgement. So men saw Him in times as dark as any we shall see. As we face, with stout hearts and active hands, whatever may come to pass, we shall do well to lay emphasis on one word in the ascription of the Lord's Prayer—"Thine *is* the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory". For, rage the nations never so furiously together, God has not abdicated. He reigns.

BARCLAY BARON.

The Challenge in India

IN A LETTER written from India during a visit from which he has just returned, Donald Campbell, Chairman of Toc H Central Executive, briefly sums up his impressions:

"The immediate future is naturally clouded by the sudden and tragic death of Gandhii and the Kashmir incident . . . Economically and politically both Dominions are faced with many problems and it is unlikely that prosperity or a higher standard of living will come about for many years. The Punjab troubles and the exchange of populations brought untold sufferings to many millions and will leave their mark for at least a generation. One bright spot at least was the wonderful way in which the Indian Christian community in the North met the challenge and helped in the Refugee Camps: this applies particularly to the women. As for Toc H, its numbers are so small that its contribution, both in the disturbed areas and throughout the Continent, must be looked upon as infinitesimal, but it did play its part.

"I have attended Branch meetings in Bombay, Lahore, Calcutta and Madras, and in each case there is undoubted life, particularly in the Southern Regional area, with its eight or nine units. It is sad that there are at present no units in Delhi and Karachi, the capital cities of the two Dominions, but perhaps new blood will be found to make a fresh start. In the meantime Lahore and Rawalpindi in the North West can only be looked upon as 'lone units'; the latter has now six members left. Even Calcutta and Bombay are becoming isolated; the former, being solely European in its membership, in no way represents Toc H in India.

"The future of Toc H in India lies in the large Indian Christian community in the South. It is here that Toc H faces its greatest challenge, as it can help to strengthen the Christian witness which will enable the Church to play its part in the future development of the country.

"I have had several long talks with Paul, the Editor of *The Lamp*, one of the most inspiring of Toc H leaders out here. He sees clearly the opportunity and is hopeful of an increase both in membership and in units in the South. Plans are being made to start four or five new units in the near future. They will consist almost entirely of Indians; even now several Branches have no Europeans apart from Padres. It is here that a full-time man, whether padre or layman, is so badly needed to guide and direct the membership and to help in the expansion of the Movement." (In response to this need Padre John Durham is going to India shortly—see *Annual Report*, p. iv).



In the Village

In the January issue of *The Lamp*, the magazine of Toc H India, the editor (Rao Sahib R. W. Paul, Secretary to the Government of Madras) issued a New Year's message to members, in which he stressed three things most needed from Toc H for his country—more life, more love, more work. A report from Palamcottah Branch in the same issue gives a good example of these qualities in action. Here are some extracts:—

“On the invitation of an enterprising ex-service Christian youth who has launched a number of social activities in his native village, we paid a visit to the village in order to help him and

to encourage the local Christians ". (Ten of the members started off in a brand new van, "inadvertently lent" by the client of a lawyer member. It broke down on a rocky cart-track, and they finished their journey in bullock carts "in slow stages".) "That did not prevent us going through the whole of the pre-arranged programme—a service in the parish church (one of our chaps preaching), Cub and Scout demonstrations, opening a village Reading Room, inaugurating a village Union and Youth League and a public reception to us by the whole village community. We thoroughly enjoyed it all, and we hope that the village Christians were greatly encouraged".

On two other occasions members of the Branch attended week-end camps. Fifteen of them, invited by Soundrapandian, a keen young Toc H probationer, went to his village in a valley of the Western Ghats. On the Saturday afternoon they ran sports for the village children and gave the prizes they had brought with them. That evening they were received, "in the usual Indian village style"—"every man, woman and child turned up to honour" them with music, acting, flower-garlands and speeches, and the entertainment went on late into the night. On Sunday morning they held two church services, with an Indian and an English member preaching, while the Branch Secretary preached at a neighbouring village. "Our visits", they write, "help us to remember that the Indian Church is preponderatingly a rural church, and Toc H in India has to take note of that fact and should, as far as possible, adapt itself to serve village folk."

The second week-end was spent at Tiruchendur, a place sacred to Hindus, with a famous temple by the seashore. A beautiful villa was put at the disposal of the Branch and more than thirty camped there, including Bishop Selwyn, three European missionaries, five members of Madras Group and visitors from Palamcottah, including a few ladies. A Branch meeting was held on Saturday afternoon, at which a prepared questionnaire on Toc H problems was discussed; that night they enjoyed a most successful mock-trial; and on Sunday there were services, a very lively discussion and a talk by an Indian member on the problems confronting Christians in the villages. They broke camp next morning and "returned to Palamcottah and the daily round, physically and spiritually much refreshed".



*" Home is the Sailor
Home from the Sea "*

Sea-going Boys

Some years ago Tôc H in Southampton came upon boys serving on the ocean-going liners who, in many cases, had no homes of their own when ashore between voyages and were nobody's 'pigeon'. The experiment of a small house in the docks rented as a hostel for them, showed that the problem needed solution on a larger scale and, with the help of a local committee, Talbot House for Sea-going Boys was built by Tôc H in 1932. The present Warden, A. V. BEAN, here gives an impression of its work.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR of the Warden's office, a face appears through the opening and a voice, "Excuse me, Sir, can I have a bed, I haven't any money". The Warden replies, "Come in, son, and tell us all about it". Then follows the story. This lad had no known relatives and was brought up in an institution, had worked as odd job boy in a small hotel and eventually managed to get to sea. He had been discharged from his last ship through being late and was flat broke and adrift. What this boy needed was friendship, somebody to talk to, and understand him. For a day or two we could not get near him, but eventually he thawed and was really grateful for our help. We found him some clothes and he went to sea again. As soon as his ship docked after a trip he was back in the Club telling us all about it and became a regular visitor. "Do you know, Sir", he said one day, "Talbot House is the only place I've stayed where 'the manager' speaks to me". This lad, like many others, never had a chance and was eager for friendship.

He is one of several problems we have during the year, mostly due to lack of home-life and understanding by step-parents. Some of them pack off and arrive in Southampton without money and just the clothes they are wearing. We cannot get them all away to sea, as under the present circumstances they must go through a Sea School, but we manage to get them fixed up in a temporary job and some of them join the Royal Navy.

It's wonderful what a variety of tales one hears from these boys who at any cost are determined to get to sea. One lad was

brought to me by an 'old boy' who found him in the docks where he had been working 'by a ship' and was now out of work. He told me a real "sob story". His mother had died when he was born and father had died just recently, he had no relatives, and was absolutely on his own. As usual in these cases I started inquiries, especially in view of the fact he was without identity card and ration book. Eventually I had an inquiry from the police for this boy who was missing from his home, and whose parents were frantic about him. He had run away to get to sea. His reply when I asked him why he had tried to sell this yarn to me was, "Well, Sir, if I had told you the truth you would have sent me home straight away".

When a new boy arrives we have a chat together to try and understand each other. I tell him he is sharing a home with me and the other boys, and like the average home we have a certain standard, and it's up to him to 'play ball'. He is then taken on a tour of the House like this. In the basement are the wash-basins, showers, with plenty of hot water, foot-baths and toilets, a drying-room with racks, ironing-table with electric iron, a baggage room where sea-bags are stored, a large games-room containing table-tennis and a rowing machine. On the ground floor is the billiards room and darts (most popular room in the Club) and dining-room (almost as popular), with piano. On the first floor are the dormitories, consisting of four to seven beds each with lockers, and also the Warden's rooms. The second floor consists of more dormitories, and Area Office from which the Area Padre and Secretary of Toc H Southern Area work. On top is the Chapel, writing-room and large lounge with library.

The new boy soon shakes down and mixes in with the others. We have an arrangement with the Royal Navy Recruiting Office nearby that we should look after boys who come for a medical and preliminary test. Many of them have never left home before and do appreciate staying at Talbot House.

It's a joy to us when, after a trip, the boys make a bee-line for the Club just to say 'Hullo'. One of the boys brought me a canary, and another one a nice cage for it. I am rather scared what next they might bring as one of them did suggest a monkey!

We are in touch with the Shipping Companies and Shipping



Talbot House for Seagoing Boys, Southampton.

Federation so that any boy who arrives to join a ship which is not ready is sent to stay at Talbot House until he signs on. The Seamen's Organisations also direct boys from their Men's Hostels to Talbot House, and we have grand co-operation with the Padre of The Mission to Seamen who often brings stranded boys to me. A typical case was a lad of sixteen who had fallen down the hold of a coalship, was taken to the hospital, and after X-ray was discharged. He struggled down to the docks (he was bruised, stiff and suffering from shock), to find his ship had sailed, and with all his gear on board. Padre Thomas brought him to me; we had to wash him (he was as black as the Ace of Spades), put him to bed, and almost feed him. He was kept in bed for two or three days; clothes were found for him, and eventually he was sent home for rest.

In large ports as this there is a definite need for Residential Clubs for sea-going boys, a place not only for sleeping, but somewhere to spend their time ashore; a place which really welcomes them and lets them feel they are part of the show; where somebody is interested in them and the job they are doing, on which, after all, the whole country depends. A. V. BEAN.



Optimism in Prince Rupert group

Canadian Commentary

DURING THE WAR YEARS Toc H in Canada, in common with the rest of the Family, experienced a falling-off in membership as men left their homes for service in the armed forces or other essential duties. Now, the latest news received from Eastern Canada tells of re-organisation and revived plans, greatly encouraged and heartened by the visit of Padre Gilbert Williams.

The position created by General Membership, commonly found unsatisfactory, is being vigorously tackled by the formation of General Members groups, holding their meetings at lunch or dinner. These meetings are proving both lively and popular, and aim at serving as bases for the recruitment of younger men from localities where it is hoped to re-establish Toc H.

Outstanding among many good steady jobs of service is the effort being made towards helping in the rehabilitation of

prisoners. Apart from visits, and meetings within the Penal Institutions, men on parole or release are approached in their own homes and, where possible, invited to the nearest Toc H unit. This far from easy task has already yielded some good results.

The first Toc H Rover Crew in Canada was formed in 1926, by Huron Branch, Toronto. Today this Branch is providing leaders, not only to the Rover Scout branch of Scouting, but also to Scout Troops and Cub Packs, and advisers to Scout Group and Camp Committees.



Gilbert Williams, Dr. H. B. Speakman (Chairman), Dr. H. Wasteneys (Hon. Regional Administrator), and Morse Robinson (E. Canada Padre), at a Rally at Willand, Ontario.

The claims of the aged and lonely are not being overlooked and especially is this so at an Old People's Home in Guelph where Toc H provides recreation for the elderly folk.

Strong efforts seem to have been made by units to secure a place of one's own and both Montreal and Guelph have built new permanent quarters, while Prince Rupert group in British Columbia, having been given the use of an 'unfinished' room in the basement of the Cathedral, are now busy laying down a floor and putting in a ceiling!

When Gilbert Williams recently visited this latter unit he was following a trail stretching back twenty years, for it was on his previous visit, in 1928, that Toc H Prince Rupert came into existence.

For readers at home it is difficult to visualise the great distances that separate many of the Canadian units. Prince Rupert is five hundred miles away from Vancouver, its nearest Toc H neighbour, while from Toronto it is nearly four hundred miles to Montreal and approximately twice that distance to either end of the Eastern Canada region.

We all know that "What the soldier said isn't evidence"; but this article, sent in response to the question "What does Toc H mean to a sailor?" strikes an authentic note in portraying the view-point of those who go down to the sea in ships.

What the Sailor Said

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN a time when Toc H meant nothing to me . . . soon it came to mean everything, a door which, if I pushed in the right direction, would open and let me into a room *ashore* where I would find friends; men who wore the same trousers as I did and who fastened them in the same way, who were often as broke as I always was, who wanted to get away from the everlasting atmosphere of sexy conversation, who tolerated the smell of rum, men who wanted to sit down and read *Punch* not so old, have a cup of tea with a real cloth on the table and (who knows?) maybe a real lady to pour it out for you—in other words the door led to ordinary folk, in ordinary circumstances, with ordinary hopes and wishes. Toc H provided first a change, then a release, then vision and then opportunity to do the same for others. Toc H, if I were speaking to a Navy man would be termed thus—Toc H isn't a secret society, there's no extra kit required and you don't have to polish any medals 'cos you won't get any. You won't have to muster, and you needn't get there right on time, and if you want to leave before the civvies have home-going prayers then you will find they have a pause where you can slip out to the local for a quick one. Mark you, these lads will get you so interested that you won't want to slip away until it's over. You will find blokes who don't want to twist you and when they ask you to have a 'cuppa' they are not being cissies, you may refuse if you like, but should they ask

you to pay for it no one is making a pay-day out of you. You'll find blokes less educated than you are, and at first you can shoot a line and slip it across them, but you will find the bloke you slipped it across has probably come from doing a job of work at the local hospital for folks sick there. You will be finding your circle of friends gradually increasing and widening; round the world you will find a friendly hand waiting to greet you—in Malta, Sydney, Colombo, Buenos Aires, where your messmates will envy you the contacts awaiting you. Toc H offers you something different—a change. It affords you a chance to lead, to press your ideas into action, to make suggestions and to criticise; and to come back happily the next evening. Toc H is a grand way of living, nothing else, just that. When you don your 'number ones' and trot off ashore you know where you are going and you *know* you'll be very welcome. You won't be walking around all night. There'll be a change of faces (from the ugly dials which gaze at you from 'Charley' to 'Pipe down'), change of conversation, or, if you wish . . . just quietness, which as you know, is to be found only in the Ship's Chapel.

How do I know all this? Listen, you'll get under the mess table and coil the laces down when I tell you I was in the R.N. over twenty years and on the messdeck at that. When I think of all the years wasted not being aware of Toc H . . . blow me down! I was just 'wet' not to try it earlier. Maybe it was because I didn't know, but there you are—you know now. Take a tip from me and give Toc H a run—a quiet run. And if you don't like it, call me a mug of the first water.

A. MATELOT.





This impression from Australia is contributed by C. SIMLEY ELLIOT, Hon. Area Commissioner of Toc H in Victoria and JOHN S. MCCREERY, Hon. Australian Treasurer, both of Melbourne.

Toc H 'Down Under'

THIS IS THE PRODUCT of the combined mental efforts of two Australians, one 'dinki-di', the other by adoption. The former was given the job and promptly leant on the other for support, the reason being obvious from the opening passages that follow.

One of the traditional methods of depicting an Australian is to show him leaning against a post, cigarette or pipe in mouth, one leg cocked across the other, looking not unlike a leg-weary cab-horse. It is our national posture of repose, in which we conserve our energies for the times when action becomes unavoidable. We fall into it naturally and literally in a physical sense at every opportunity: we are wont to adopt it figuratively, in a mental sense also.

Looking back over the history of Toc H in Australia since its inception in 1925, there is to be found not a little evidence that we Australians have sought a leaning-post to help us through our Toc H problems just as regularly as in other things. This refers to the way in which we have leant on Toc H at Home to supply us with full-time staff to supplement the bare half-dozen we have been able to pluck from our own ranks from time to time during those twenty-three years. Nor have we been disappointed in the gratifying sense of support that a well-chosen leaning-post always gives, and we are genuinely grateful for those staff men who have visited us in the past and for the promise of those who are about to do so.

As this is being written, 'Lemon' (Le Maitre) is approaching Australian waters, to take up staff duties in Victoria and Tasmania. Within a few months, Padre Ken Bloxham will be here to fill an endowed Chaplaincy in South Australia. They will both see something of all six Toc H Areas, the boundaries of which are identical with the State boundaries. What will they find in the Toc H life of this Island Continent, which has almost 58 times the area of England but a population of only about seven million people?

In the first place, they will find that they will have to adjust themselves to the tremendous distances that will separate them from the three other staff men who, with themselves, will comprise the entire full-time Australian staff—the distances that will introduce them to new problems in establishing and maintaining contact with rural units. If, for example, the West Australian Area Secretary takes them to visit Geraldton, the return trip from Perth will cover 624 miles. If later they go from Queensland Area Headquarters in Brisbane to the northernmost unit, at Townsville, the return journey will be 1,600 miles and they will already have covered nearly 3,500 miles between Perth and Brisbane. In Victoria, the second smallest State, they will find a member of the Executive travelling 320 miles each month to attend the monthly Area Executive meeting.

They will realize, then, how desperately needed was the increase in staff which their coming represents, in order to make possible regular visits to units outside the Capital Cities and 'missionary' visits to districts where Toc H is not established. Despite this, they will find that some of the strongest units in Australia are in these outlying districts and they will find units where members think nothing of riding up to twenty miles on horseback to attend meetings.

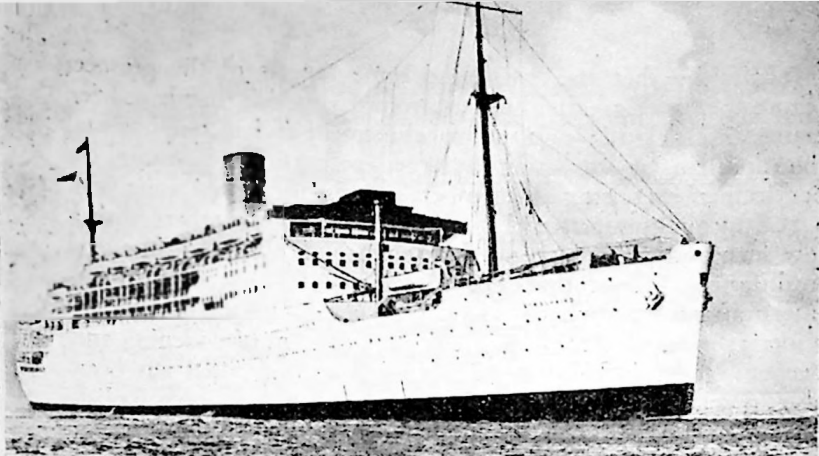
Once they have adjusted themselves, the travellers will find that these separating distances do not isolate them, that air travel bridges the biggest gaps, that, despite the small numbers of staff men, each is surrounded by an Area Headquarters team of enthusiastic 'spare time plus' members, warm in the welcome they extend and eager to support them.

It may be that they will find some aspects of the prospect before them not greatly different from that which they have been facing in England: post-war re-adjustment still incomplete and the problem of attracting a larger proportion of young ex-Servicemen exercising all members' minds; occasional units with a healthy predominance of young members, some others with a few such and some with a disheartening lack of youth; the usual multifarious labour that Toc H takes unto itself everywhere, intermingled with what is as yet little more than a groping after wider avenues of community service and means of widening and deepening the influence of Toc H in a country that has been able to relax since the end of the war and that has been foolish enough to allow herself to do so.

In Western Australia, the new arrivals will find the first indication of how a few men can grasp an idea from the Toc H JOURNAL and put it into action on the other side of the world. The Toc H Entertainment Unit in that State is a title which cloaks a wealth of activity in bringing entertainment to underprivileged children and to the sick in hospitals.

In South Australia they will find a Country Student's Hostel accommodating, at a cost of 35s. each per week (and paying its way), twenty-four country students attending schools or the University in Adelaide. When they have seen the type of accommodation provided, they will join with the rest of the Australian Family in congratulating the South Australian Area on this venture.

In all States they will find a wholehearted interest in youth activities such as Boys' Clubs and Camps, but they will also find that the urgent need in this country is that the rising generation, carefree, happy and generous, should be inspired to lives of positive Christian witness, and that Toc H is still seeking how to show these youngsters the way. The picture of Toc H in Australia is not yet one of accomplishment in a national sense. It might even be said that the impact of Toc H on the nation has been negligible, despite all that has been achieved in individual communities. Perhaps the healthiest sign for the future of Toc H here is that every Area, recognising this fact, is asking itself: Why?
C.S.E. & J.S.McC.



Jamon's Journey

'JAMON' is a composite personality, made up of 'JACK' and 'LEMON' (J. H. M. Shaw and L. E. Le Maître), members of our Home Staff, who recently left on a mission to Toc H in New Zealand and Australia respectively, travelling in P. & O. 'Strathaird', seen above.

SO FAR we have been unlucky as far as places of interest are concerned. Gibraltar was a dim black shape on a night sky, Malta we passed some time on January 28 and didn't see at all.

Life on board soon falls into a regular pattern. Meals are the day's guide-posts. Before and after them you can read, write, sit and think or indeed just sit. Beyond this and dancing, bridge, the cinema and all the diversions arranged by the Sport Committee there is absolutely nothing to do. You always have a fair idea what time of day it is, but quite often have no idea at all what day of the week it is. We won't elaborate about all the good things we eat. Having been through the mill of austerity it is exciting to discover that one still has a palate.

Port Said was our first stop. We could say we have seen Port Said and let it end there. This would be unjust, for the place has something for all the senses. Sights, sounds and smells

abound. Tourists are always fair game, even in Ireland, but the pestering at Port Said must be experienced to be believed. Our most peaceful time was in the native quarter which we got into more by accident than design. Here the people left us alone but our senses were assailed. We were soon back on the ship.

'Barren Rocks' and Breakdown

That afternoon (Friday, January 30) we sailed down the Suez Canal, passing, on our way in, a trooper packed with men on their way to England. Their comments on our womenfolk were all the more interesting because they were so clearly enunciated. The news of Gandhi's death caused quite a stir on the ship. It was interesting and sometimes disturbing to discover how varied were people's reactions to him. As usual many disposed of him in terms of the effect of Indian development on them personally.

We reached Aden on February 3. "The barren rocks of Aden" is no idle description. It looks like a gigantic pit-head with no vegetation except a little artificial bit on the harbour front. It only rains here about once in ten years—there is obviously an opening for some enterprising Manchester man. Our stop was a very brief one, so in order not to miss the local Toc H contact, one went ashore and the other stayed on board. In spite of this we didn't meet him, so we can give no news of Toc H Aden.

On the night of February 5, the ship developed engine trouble. A terrific bump somewhere down below was instantly followed by steam being let off and the ship was at a standstill. Next morning we were moving again but at less than half speed. The ship was buzzing with rumours. Later came an announcement that we should be about thirty hours late at Bombay.

When we got on deck on Sunday, February 8, Bombay was clearly visible to port. It was some hours later before we tied up at Ballard Pier, and we decided to remain on board for a while in case the local Toc H folk appeared, and after lunch the Secretary, Geoff Marsden, turned up. We learnt that they had been all set for us the previous day but we didn't arrive. Geoff looked after us for the rest of the day and it was Toc H hospitality in the best tradition. The sights, sounds and thoughts provoked by Bombay would make an article in themselves. Next day we

met more Toc H people at lunch and spent a quite delightful evening at the home of Max and Mrs. Marriott, both Toc H members from Nottingham.

Toc H in Bombay

What about Toc H in and around Bombay? There are four units, Bombay I and Byculla who meet together and Girgairn and Parell. Membership is mixed, Indian, Anglo-Indian and European. All meet weekly and attendance appears to be reasonably good. The unrest, uncertainty, and insecurity of the present general position in India is reflected in Toc H. Meetings are often affected by a local curfew. Service is a problem. For over twenty years Toc H in Bombay has offered friendship and hospitality to British Servicemen: this opportunity has now gone. They hope there may be scope for similar activity with the Merchant Navy but it is too soon to say how it will develop. The members we met impressed us by the steady way in which they were trying to express their beliefs in their everyday work. This we felt was far more important than an imposing list of jobs.

They need new members and especially young members. We were interested to learn that a considerable number of young men are still going out to India. It would be useful if more of them could be commended to Toc H there. It seems obvious that if Toc H is to survive in India it must appeal to the Indians. Its message must be worked out in terms of the present situation; anything that smacks of days that are gone will defeat itself however good its intentions. There is no doubt about the keenness of the present members in Bombay. They believe in Toc H and want it to be more effective. The present units are making a much bigger contribution than they realise. But it is not surprising that they feel swamped by the teeming millions around them in their own city and depressed by the evidence of so much irresponsibility and greed when a public spirit is the need of the hour. Any consideration of the future of Toc H in India demands that these larger issues be faced. Jamon spent just over two days in Bombay and was fascinated and terribly perplexed by it all.

‘JAMON.’



Toc H Mark V, Southampton

Question—Marks !

Quiz on the Houses of Toc H

What is a Mark?

A Mark is the name given to a Toc H Residential House. The word was taken over from the 1914-18 war when it was used, followed by a number, to indicate a particular type of work. So Mark I means the first in order of foundation of these houses.

Where are they?

In England there are Marks at:—
London (7); Birmingham; Bristol; Derby; Leeds; Leicester; Liverpool; Manchester; Newcastle; Salford; Southampton; Swindon.

There are also Marks in Calcutta, Toronto, Buenos Aires, and Johannesburg.

How did Toc H get them?

In every instance a House was given to Toc H by one or more of its friends. Very often it was given in memory of someone who had been killed in the war, and in like manner the rooms were furnished. Today in some of the Marks rooms are being refurnished in memory of someone killed in the second World War.

Why did and does Toc H want them?

Great cities can be very lonely, and a man coming to work in a strange place, away from his family, can feel very "lost". A Mark gives him a home. There is, however, more to it than this. A Mark is a place where men can together try to learn and practise Christian Community living. It is a family, not a hostel. But the family tries to look outwards as well as inwards, and so the members in their spare time attempt to serve the locality in which the Mark is situated. The scope of service is so wide that no Marksman need feel that he has no contribution to offer.

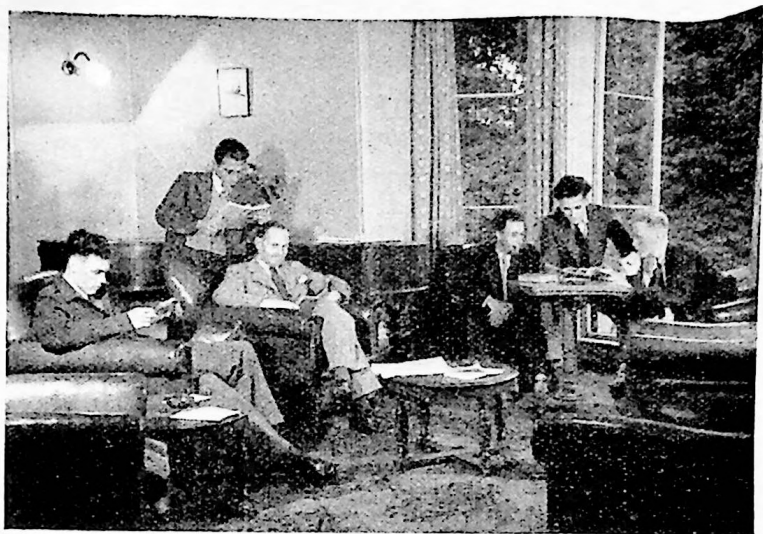
What is a Mark like?

All the Marks were originally private houses. Most of the bedrooms are large and contain two, three, or four beds. In addition to a Lounge there is a quiet room where the Marksmen can study in the evenings. Each Mark has a Chapel where Evening Prayers are said and regular Celebrations of Holy Communion are held; attendance is, of course, voluntary.

Who live in the Marks?

In a Mark will be found twenty or thirty men ranging in age from the lad just beginning to go to work and knowing hardly anything of Toc H, to the man holding a responsible position who has possibly been a member for some years. They will come from every walk of life, from every section of society, from every religious denomination or from none at all.

In order that the Mark may function smoothly and effectively there is a House Team, at the head of which there is the Honorary Warden. Along with him are the Padre, the House Secretary, the Jobmaster and others. But the success of this experiment in Christian Community living is, in the long run,



In a Mark Lounge

dependent upon all who live in the Mark. It is an adventure, and all adventure is best undertaken by friends.

How are the Marks financed?

Each Mark aims at being self-supporting. There is a standard charge for accommodation but Marksmen are asked to pay according to their means; so it will be found that some of the men are paying above the standard rate and thereby enabling the man who cannot afford the standard rate to live in the Mark.

J.H.C. & J.D.

Ourselves and Others

THE *II JOURNAL* is published at the beginning of each month (price 6d.; per doz. 4s. 4d., post free; annual subscription 5s.). The present issue is an exception—a double number, price 1s.; to make up, none will appear in August.

Of the photographs in this issue that on p. 122, taken by Cecil Beaton (Crown copyright), is reproduced by courtesy of India House, and that on p. 132 by courtesy of Australia House.

Gesture in Germany

As the Allied armies fought their way from the Normandy beaches towards the Rhine, the Toc H War Services organisation was called upon to open Clubs for British troops in Belgium. After the surrender it moved its Clubs on to German soil and now has eight of them open in various parts of the British Zone of Occupation. In and around these Clubs there are also a number of Toc H Circles consisting of groups of British Service men and women, now being joined by a growing number of young Germans, who come in the first instance for discussion purposes, officially encouraged, and often remain to work alongside our own people in practical tasks for their fellow countrymen in need. IAN FRASER, a member of Toc H Staff at home, was recently sent to Germany to study the situation and to report. Here he gives a general picture of a great emergency and of the small but useful part Toc H can play in its remedy.

WE ARE ALL AWARE of the problem of Germany from our reading of the world's press, from the speeches of politicians, or in some more personal way through friends or relief agencies. In spite of all this there does not seem to be any large and forceful body of public opinion, able to sustain a policy capable of grappling with the problem in a continuous and fruitful fashion.

In some ways this is not surprising since the scale and complexity of the problem of re-building Germany is vaster than anything which has faced Europe in its long history. Never since the breakdown of the Roman Empire and the invasions from the East have so many people been rootless and homeless, and never in the history of mankind has sheer physical reconstruction been required on such a vast scale.

It must be brought home to people somehow that this re-building of Germany is fundamental to any re-building of Europe and that without such re-building any adequate future for Europe and for Western civilization is well nigh impossible. The standard of life for all Europe is largely dependent on Germany's productive capacity, and, with all precautions against further wars, this must be allowed full play.

Any policy is, of course, further complicated by the division of the country into diversely administered Zones, Zones which only too often are used as pawns in the hands of the occupying powers and where the conduct of the occupying forces can make or mar any policy however enlightened.

In the centre of this picture of breakdown and disagreement are the German people trying to live and our occupying forces maintaining certain essential services and undertaking garrison duties. It is at this level that the greatest impact can be made and where in the daily routine of living, the new Europe, whatever its pattern, will be forged.

Inevitably the basic pre-occupation of the German people today is in the search for food, fuel and shelter, and the provision of these things by any means, legal or illegal, colours every situation. As is well known more than fifty per cent. of German cities are totally destroyed, transport is hopelessly broken down and inadequate; disease, much of it arising from lack of food, increases daily, while millions of homeless and despairing people have no permanent domicile.

'Normal is Abnormal'

It is not surprising that moral breakdown is in some ways almost complete. The children of a starving family are bound to regard their petty thefts of food as legitimate and parents cannot under such circumstances provide a better example, since without such thefts life becomes impossible. The youth, product of fascist teaching, regards black marketing as legitimate plundering, especially when they see some of the British engaged in similar operations. Every man's hand is against another's.

Much of the sexual aberration arises at this level, since with hunger as the goad the selling of one's body is one way of obtaining the means to buy food. This particular kind of breakdown is facilitated in other ways. As always, where occupation forces are predominantly young males, the risk of sexual laxity is high and in the present condition of Germany probably higher than the average. The fact that fascist teaching increased the sexual tension in German women, many of whose men-folk are still prisoners or simply missing, increases the danger, and it is estimated that Germany has now three million surplus women

of marriageable years. All these factors tend to operate fully so long as hunger and despair stalk every minute of the German's waking life.

Speaking of this general moral breakdown, Karl Arnold, minister-President of North Rhine Westphalia, a Christian Democrat, said "We are living in a narrower and narrower circle, the normal becomes the abnormal and the abnormal normal; demoralization in public and private economic life has grown appallingly, and just below the surface is anarchy."

The Challenge to Toc H

It is obvious in such circumstances as these that the conduct and activity of the occupying forces must be beyond reproach and be capable of a personal witness to the purpose and meaning of life. It is in this relationship with the German people that the greatest impact can be made in fostering a new and creative way of living.

Our Service Clubs and Anglo-German discussion groups play an important part in fostering this new relationship and such work is of paramount importance. The Clubs provide the means whereby the British people engaged in the occupation can maintain a proper sense of responsibility and conduct while, at the same time, they provide an avenue for multiplying relationships with German people in the undertaking of practical social work.

That such a task is difficult goes without saying since, on the British side, the opportunities for evading responsibility are large and standards can easily be corrupted, while on the German side the spiritual and intellectual chaos left by fascism are such as beggar description.

Our main task with our own people, other than the maintenance of a real sense of responsibility, is to fight against the crippling sense of inertia which especially besets the younger men in the Forces who can see no adequate reason for their being in Germany at all. This can only be done when their energy is harnessed to creative activities and practical social work through the Clubs. It is only as we succeed in enlisting the support of British personnel in our Club and Anglo-German work that the latter work can go ahead on its proper scale. We must make these people fully aware of the opportunity.

That man finds the meaning and fulfilment of life in a community of persons is primarily a religious conception, but unfortunately very few young Germans have much use for religion, having been taught otherwise. The Lutheran Church itself has been particularly weak in its Christian social teaching in the past, so that in a very real sense if we are going to teach a religious conception to young Germans, as I believe we must, we will have to begin by sharing with them a real experience of Christian fellowship. This cannot be done in hundreds where the balance of non-believing persons is overwhelming, but in smaller groups, like a Toc H Circle, where life can really be shared.

Every such group should be encouraged to undertake voluntary social work, so that it can see the relationship between theory and practice, achieve a wider concern about people and witness to the voluntary principle in the life of Germany. Some such work is being done at Lübeck where the local Toc H group visits the D.P. Camp, at Göttingen where the group reads to blind persons, and in other places by work for children. To get the voluntary principle across to the German people may be the most important contribution which these groups have to make.

If a multiplicity of such groups can achieve a high quality of personal life and share a true experience of fellowship, their practice and contribution will find its own expression and pattern in Germany. This will be a real thing, not something imposed from without but an indigenous thing working outward. This may be the form which Toc H—not so-called—can eventually take in Germany.

The primary need at the present time is to teach three things which Toc H accepts implicitly but which as yet have not made any real growth in Germany, (1) that people matter for themselves, (2) that real life ensues in a fellowship of persons and not in a hierarchy of power, and (3) that the expression of this fellowship is voluntary Christian social action in the world.

The task is difficult and on the scale of events our contribution to it may appear to be small. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it is a fundamental contribution which by its conduct and depth of purpose can give that most needed of all things in Germany today, a meaning to life.

IAN FRASER.



A Room, with a View

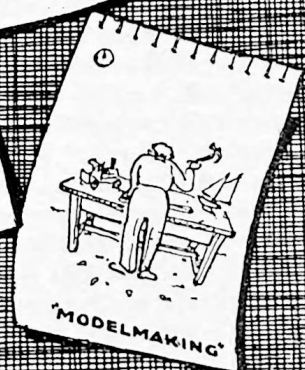
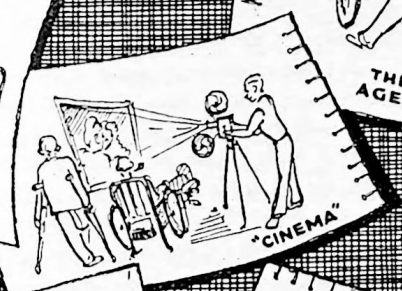
THIS IS AN ORDINARY TALE, and one which has been repeated all the way down Toc H history. Arnold and Daybrook Branch hadn't had a permanent home since 1944 when, as a climax to much searching, a benefactor offered them the use of the upper floor of his barn, previously used as a lumber-room.

A spell of corporate action, coupled with the skill of carpenter, mason and bricklayer members with others, mostly executive, as navvies, soon revealed the shape of things to come. For several months the members met at least once a week and worked—and sang together, while Branch 'business' was often accompanied by the sounds of brick-chipping and sawing.

Walls were bricked-up, windows fitted and lighting and heating installed, and early this year when the transformation was complete, Dr. K. Shallcross Dickinson was invited to perform the opening ceremony of what had been his loft. Visitors found a bright and homely meeting-place, with Arnold and Daybrook members justly proud of their new home.

IMPRESSIONS OF TOC H SERVICE

BY
Boris



SERVICE

"THE RENT WE PAY FOR OUR ROOM ON EARTH"

Here DON ROGERS, full-time Toc H Padre to the Western Province of South Africa and to the Rhodesias, briefly surveys the wide field.

Report from Southern Africa

THERE HAS BEEN a swelling note of optimism amongst the Staff and voluntary leaders of Toc H Southern Africa at the last two Staff Conferences and S.A. Executive Meetings—conferences and executive meetings being held at the centre of each Area in turn at six monthly intervals in order to give the far-flung membership an opportunity to meet the 'Brass Hats' and Staff and to give the latter personal knowledge of each Area. It remains to be proved during the current year whether this optimism is justified. It cannot be claimed that there has been a spectacular increase in membership during the past year, but our efforts at recruitment have met with a measure of success and a number of promising new units have been brought into being. On the whole, the spirit of the membership is good, there is a growing awareness of the need to deepen our purpose and extend our ranks, and an increasing desire to render effective service. The wider our horizon the greater the problems confronting us and the more apparent our opportunities, to meet them our resources of brain and hand must be greatly augmented.

The National Service Committee

The Committee has maintained its efficient direction of various large scale projects, notably: the communal houses in Johannesburg and East London giving temporary accommodation to ex-Servicemen and their families; the accommodation and rehabilitation of disabled ex-Servicemen at Pretoria North, for which they have received the warm approbation of the Director-General of Demobilization; the latest venture, the house *Entabene* at Johannesburg, which is providing much needed accommodation for new settlers along with other ex-Servicemen and their families.

Northern Rhodesia

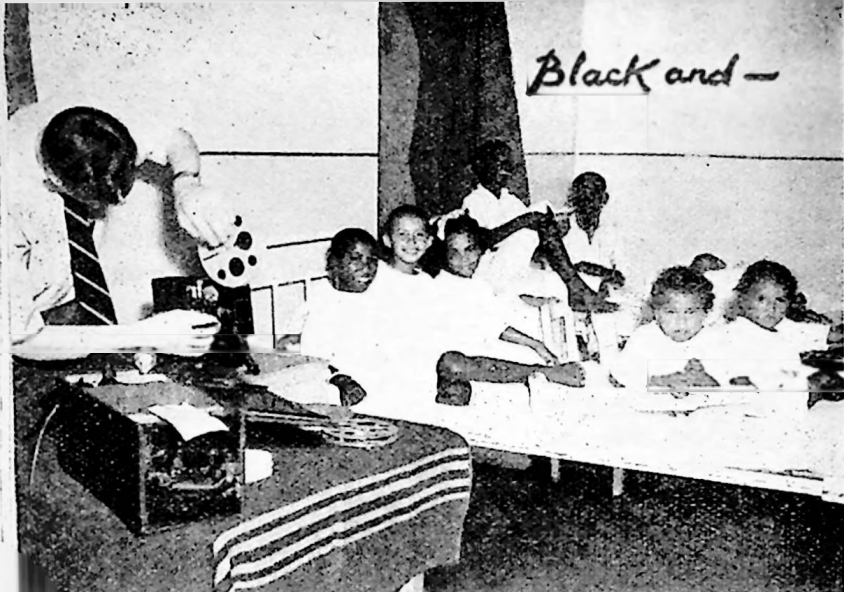
Northern Rhodesia has come into focus again. A new and very promising unit has been established in the capital, Lusaka; the one unit that functioned throughout the war years, Broken Hill, is making a determined effort to re-adjust itself and expand; N'dola is busy getting under way again and is hoping to reintroduce Toc H to the Copper Belt; Livingstone is now showing signs of coming to life again.

Southern Rhodesia

Southern Rhodesia has a healthy independent brand of the Toc H spirit, its leaders and the majority of its members know what they are after and are prepared to go all-out to that end. It has virile units at Bulawayo, Salisbury and Umtali, while Marandellas—a country unit—is not far behind them; other units are trying to re-establish themselves and new units are being attempted. A veritable avalanche of Immigrants have arrived in the country and Toc H has made various efforts to assist them. Overseas members have found a real welcome. There is evidence of increased interest in the welfare of the Native population and an earnest effort is being made to keep pace with this growing problem. The Talbot House and Club in Salisbury is proving its worth as a real home and congenial centre for young single men, and these are beginning to show good value in the ranks of Toc H; it is hoped to establish similar houses and clubs in other centres when suitable premises become available.

The Transvaal

Transvaal leaders and members are in good heart, they have laid emphasis on extension and have successfully established five new units. In this connection, to quote the Organizing Secretary, "the brightest star in the firmament" is Mafeking, which received its Rushlight a few months ago in the presence of some thirty keen young recruits, a real inroad into the hesitant 20 to 30 age group. Flying Squads were brought into being to assist in the drive for extension, and this has led to the formation of a Flying Executive by way of experiment. One unit in Johannesburg has experimented with Open Forum meetings and has had a good measure of success. Service is being stepped up, and a new venture is the formation of a Cinema Team



*Cape Town Cinema Team at work in a non-European Hospital Ward
Evidence that the Cinema Job is worthwhile*

which has given shows to the oft neglected Native Houseboys. An attempt is now being made to bring the old Mark I in Johannesburg back on to Mark lines.

Natal

This Province reports a new spirit abroad. A determined effort to form District Teams is now being made, and surveys are being conducted with a view to imminent expansion in various parts of the province. An interesting piece of experimentation is the formation of the Durban & District unit; it holds its meetings monthly and draws its membership largely from already existing units. It has enabled Toc H to provide a platform for really good speakers and to obtain good representative opinion; it is also breaking down the isolationism of some scattered units. Durban North has developed the idea of an Open Forum and has attracted large audiences. Durban Central unit has taken the new Talbot House under its wing and is making it a real venture of faith and works. The full-time



These shows bring cheer to 1,500 secluded young lives in the Cape Town neighbourhood every month

Padre and his wife are in residence at this house and they are backed by the House Committee in their intention that the house shall make a vital spiritual contribution to the life of Toc H; already a series of Sunday night discussions is under way. Natal has given much time and effort to the welfare of the non-European population. They have met with certain disappointments but are pressing on and have launched out with open air cinema shows which are proving a great success.

Eastern Province

Eastern Province has no full-timer of its own but the General Secretary has recently made a tour of the Area. He reports a hard fight on the part of several units to keep Toc H alive, and a general desire to get really moving again. If East London unit is symptomatic of that desire, then Eastern Province has a great future to look forward to. This unit was reduced to cadre strength at the end of the war and now fields a membership of approximately thirty: the term "field" is used designedly

because their range of jobs might well be an inspiration to many a unit.

Western Province

Western Province witnessed the receding of the tide of Toc H to lowest ebb during the latter war years but, at last, there are signs that the turn is taking place. Outside the peninsular, activities were at a standstill, but recently two old units have been revived—Mossel Bay, the farthest east, shows signs of great promise and may well be the beach-head for extension in that direction. As evidence of increasing interest with the peninsular, one would refer to the recent World Chain of Light Ceremony in Cape Town Cathedral when about 250 persons listened to the Archbishop's encouraging address. One new unit has had to forego its meetings for the time being because it is heavily engaged in rebuilding the Western Province Charity Bioscope circuit. A team of twenty projectionists has been formed, of which half are Toc H men and the rest friends who are interested in the job on hand; twenty-five institutions embracing hospitals, homes for the aged and houses of detention are on the monthly circuit. A weekly Toc H Sandwich Club is quite a feature of Toc H life in Cape Town; it provides a modest platform for authoritative speakers, and much thought is being directed towards the many and acute problems of the coloured community.

In General

We have a small but devoted membership and we have a close and valuable liaison with our Women's Section. We find it entertaining to get together for social events as well as for jobs of service. We must continue and increase our drive for recruits, and in this connection we have made a set at the school-leaving boys and have been encouraged by the valuable co-operation of many Headmasters. We have received a certain fillip from members who have joined us from Overseas and we are very grateful for the staunch help of many friends who are not yet numbered amongst our membership. Our opportunities are great but our resources small: we shall "lift up our eyes unto the hills" and go forward with faith and courage. D.R.